

# Local Woman Turns 99

Former elementary school teacher reflects on life

By MORAG MACLACHLAN

Beatrice Chase's move to Duxbury happened quickly.

"My husband always wanted to live here. He picked up the paper one day and saw an ad for a house on Chestnut Street. He said to me 'this afternoon, we are going to Duxbury.' We looked at the house, had it inspected and bought it," Chase, 99, said.



Beatrice Chase of Pinewood Lane will turn 100 in December.

Chase, her husband Theodore and their three sons moved to Duxbury from Wollaston in 1944. Her oldest son, Dick, remembers entering Duxbury schools in second grade. His younger brother, Larry, started kindergarten and his youngest sibling, Bob, stayed at home with their mom.

continued on page 17

①

## Local Woman Turns 99

continued from page one

At that time, the town was still utilizing its one-room schoolhouses. Dick Chase said first and second graders attended Tarkiln School. Third and fourth graders took classes at the Village, located near what is today the Winsor House on Washington Street. The Duxbury Free Library used to serve as the home for fifth graders through high school seniors. The building that is now Duxbury Middle School did not exist and the land the current high school sits on was part of the Wright estate.

Chase, who had been a teacher at a one-room schoolhouse in Plympton, did not fly under her new town's radar for long. Duxbury Superintendent Everett Handy contacted her about teaching fifth grade.

"I told him my boys come first. He told me if there were times when I needed to stay home with them, I could. He was very accommodating," Chase said.

The Alden Street School was built in the 1950s and the fifth and sixth grades moved from the high school to this new facility. Chase spent the majority of her career as a teacher at the Alden Street School, where she taught hundreds of students over the years including *Clipper* publisher David Cutler.



Beatrice Chase said she never thought she would live to be 99, but feels her involvement in the community and a healthy social life helps keep her spirit young.

students by attending class reunions. Her retirement also left her time to travel. She and an art teacher from Duxbury visited Europe, where Chase fell in love with England and Italy.

However, her life was not always picture perfect. The family relocated from Chestnut Street to Pinewood Lane in 1962 after Chase's husband died from a sudden heart attack. Both Dick Chase and his youngest brother, Bob, joined the army. Bob Chase was killed during the Vietnam War. A couple of year's ago, Beatrice Chase's middle son, Larry, died.

"This is all that's left of the family," Dick Chase said referring to himself and his mother.

"Some days I feel like I am 109," she joked. "But there are plenty of things to do in a small town. Help out at a church or help an organization in town. It's an interesting life and you will meet all kinds of people. I also liked seeing how my three children progressed...where they wanted to go and what they wanted to do. I tried living completely all the time."

It seems Chase's mantra works. She will turn 100 on Dec. 21.

Unlike today, where Duxbury boasts a variety of activities including music on the town green courtesy of the South Shore Conservatory, taking a sailing lesson at the maritime school or enjoying an exhibit at the Art Complex, there were only a limited number of activities for a family with young children. Dick Chase said Scoops and Farfar's did not exist, but residents could cool off with a cone at the White Brothers Dairy Bar located where Lougee Insurance now sits on Bay Road.

Other town fixtures also occupied different addresses back in the day. Chase said the grocery store was located where Duxbury Pizza now sits. A pharmacy was situated next door to the grocery store.

In addition to teaching and raising a family, Beatrice Chase said she remained active with the Eastern Star, the female version of the Masons, attending the group's regular dinners. She also volunteered at the Unitarian Universalist Church.

"I did a little bit of everything. I joined committees, made a little path and followed it," Chase said.

Chase taught for 30 years in Duxbury schools. Even after her retirement, she said she kept tabs on her former

copy 2

①